Passport Offices *in* Bihar

2698. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Passport offices functioning in Bihar as on date with details of each of them;

(b) the total number of applications received by each office during the last two years and disposed off and pending for the same period;

(c) whether Govt, propose to open new passport offices in the state in near future;

(d) if so the details and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) There *is* one fulfledged Passport Office in Bihar which is located at Patna. In addition, there are two Passport Application Collection Centres in Bihar, one at Darbhanga and the other at Ranchi.

(b) The number of applications received by Passport Office, Patna, (including from Passport Collection Centres, Darbhanga and Ranchi) in 1998 was 67,308, in 1999 was 61,447 and upto 31st July, 2000 was 31,549.

The number of passports issued by Passport Office, Patna in 1998 was 59,267, in 1999 was 54,395 and upto 31st July, 2000 was 26,528.

The number of applications pending at Passport Office, Patna at the end of 1998 was 6,820, end of 1999 was nil and end of July, 2000 was 550.

(An applications is considered pending only when it is accurately completed without any objection and where a police clearance has been received but on which a passport has not been issued by a Passport Office within five weeks of the application being filed).

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The recommendation of the Standing Committee of

Parliament has been that a passport office should be centrally located taking into account existing offices and should receive an average of 50,000 applications per annum. These criteria do not justify establishment of another passport office in Bihar.

Review of Nuclear Non-Proliferation

2699. SHRI V.V, RAGHAVAN:

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a UN-sponsored international conference to review nuclear non-proliferation was held at New York recently;

(b) if so, the details and the gist of the discussion that took place and the outcome thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that the five nuclear powers refused to accept a time table to accomplish the total elimination of their formidable nuclear arsenal; and

(d) if so, the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The 6th Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) was held in New York from 24th April—20th May. The work of the Conference was organsied around three Main Committees on Nuclear disarmament, Safeguards and Nuclear Weapon Free Zones and on Nuclear energy and peaceful applications. A subsidiary body on 'regional issues including with respect to Israel' was set up under the second Main Commitee. The Conference adopted a final document.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Government's position on this issue is contained in External Affairs Minister's suo motu statement in Parliament on 9 May 2000 which is given below as statement.